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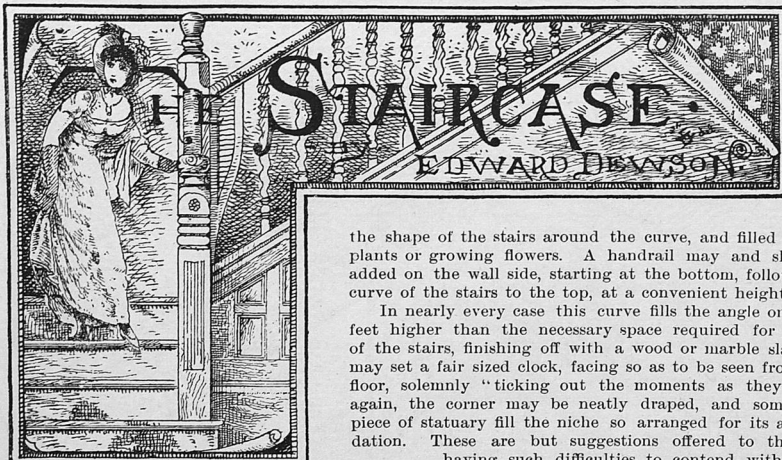
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### ACCESSORIES AND DETAILS OF HOME DECORATION.

A BROAD and easy avenue of ascent from one floor to another, is such a self-evident helping, and in itself so suggestive of comfort and ease, that the wonder is the fact does not more readily impress itself upon the most superficial mind, in the planning and building of a house; we have been so in the habit of taking things for granted, and of running in grooves in these matters, that the fact of a possibility of necessary fixtures being comfortable and to our taste, seems like a revelation to most of us.

To the dwellers in city houses of the comparatively inexpensive class, many awkward necessities, entailed by want of space and other limitations, naturally enough bring about awkward results; but why these results should be carried bodily into the same class of country homes and implanted there, is more than a thoughtful mind can contemplate with any degree of patience. Instance, for example, the long, narrow and precipitous stairways so commonly met with in both city and country, ending in a sharp series of "winders" at the top, a dangerous makeshift, threatening the passengers, more especially old people and children, with sprained ankles and broken limbs, if nothing worse; and to one who, having made a misstep at the start, finds himself at the bottom, *brevi mauri*, this mode of descent although expeditious beyond any manner of doubt, is most noticeable as having many disadvantages.

In a city house there is oftentimes some excuse for this state of affairs, but in the country, *never!* Should it so exist, however, the question arises how best to remedy it; the chief difficulty is the narrowness of the step where a good foot hold is most needed, *i. e.*, next the handrail, where the staircase turns at the "winder," and the expedient suggests itself of turning in the rail at this point in such a manner as to direct the passenger toward the wider portion of the stairs; this would necessitate narrowing up the traveling space at the curve, and to a certain extent spoil the symmetry, if such can be, but when a feeble footstep travels the stairs two or more times a day, symmetry and customary forms should unquestionably be sacrificed to comfort, and above all, safety; and on the other hand, if this change be made with taste and judgment, its oddity need by no means pretend ugliness, although for a while it might seem strange and out of place; and furthermore, a pleasing feature may be made of the space thus cut off by adding a neat zinc-lined box of some pretty wood, or paint to match the finish, fitting and following

the shape of the stairs around the curve, and filled with pot plants or growing flowers. A handrail may and should be added on the wall side, starting at the bottom, following the curve of the stairs to the top, at a convenient height for use.

In nearly every case this curve fills the angle only a few feet higher than the necessary space required for the run of the stairs, finishing off with a wood or marble slab; here may set a fair sized clock, facing so as to be seen from either floor, solemnly "ticking out the moments as they fly," or again, the corner may be neatly draped, and some pretty piece of statuary fill the niche so arranged for its accommodation. These are but suggestions offered to those who

having such difficulties to contend with, do not feel prepared to meet the necessary trouble and expense of tearing out and rebuilding, even should the surroundings permit of it.

If in the start it should be found necessary, either by lack of space or other conditions, to carry up the stairs with a "winder," the "French method," shown by the plan (Sketch No. 2), will, to a certain extent, mitigate the narrowness of the stair at the curve, that is, to drop the radiating point quite a little way below the center of the circle, thus allowing the steps to radiate at a broader angle, and giving a somewhat wider foothold at the narrow point of each "winder." The plan given explains itself.

In tearing out and rebuilding when the hall is narrow and cramped, necessitating a narrow stairway and still narrower passage back to the rear, a snug little hall—and convenient as well—may be made by removing the partition separating it from a small adjoining room, allowing the stairs to fill the whole space of the original hallway, thus giving breadth and dignity to that portion of the house that should, as the key note to the whole, impress the visitor by its simple and quiet dignity. Instead of entirely removing the partition wall, leave about a foot wide of the wall space at the extreme ends, and arch the top; the effect will be pretty in itself, and the danger of weakening the partition wall overhead, should there be any, thus done away with.

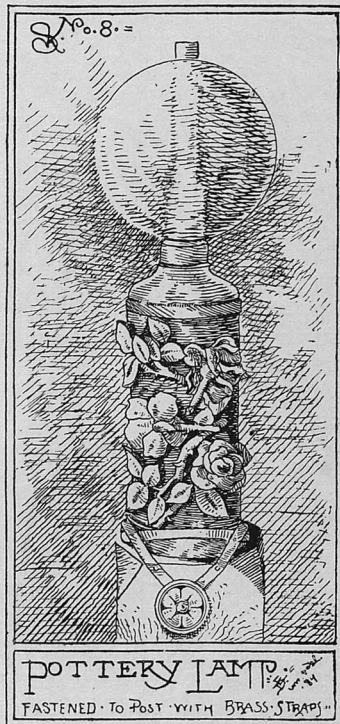
There is no space in these papers to touch upon the historical side of the questions involved, but as a matter of curiosity, the illustrations Nos. 3 and 4 may be of interest, showing as they do the parallel between the steps of Medieval times and the modern luxurious staircase.

The Medieval stairs were usually built either upon the outside surface or into the thickness of the wall itself, its width being divided into two sets of steps both of equal length and width, but the risers, excepting the first and last, are made twice the usual height; in using this stair one foot is placed upon the step of one flight and the

other on a step of the other, and so on alternately until the top is reached.

In the decorating of the landings, staircase, and walls, much taste may be shown, but it should be of a quiet and low-toned order. A landing, if it be of any size, may be arranged prettily as an ante-room, a rug or piece of carpeting on the floor, independent of the stair carpet, which may run under it; a tall clock, a quaint chair or two, and, should the size permit, a small and simple table. Should the landing be quite small, making oddities an impossibility, build in a fairly broad bench of pine boards, in the window, allowing, of course, that there is a window; cover this with cushions of some dark, rich-looking material, strong and serviceable, and this will be found a welcomed resting place, a sort of cosy "half-way house" between the two floors.

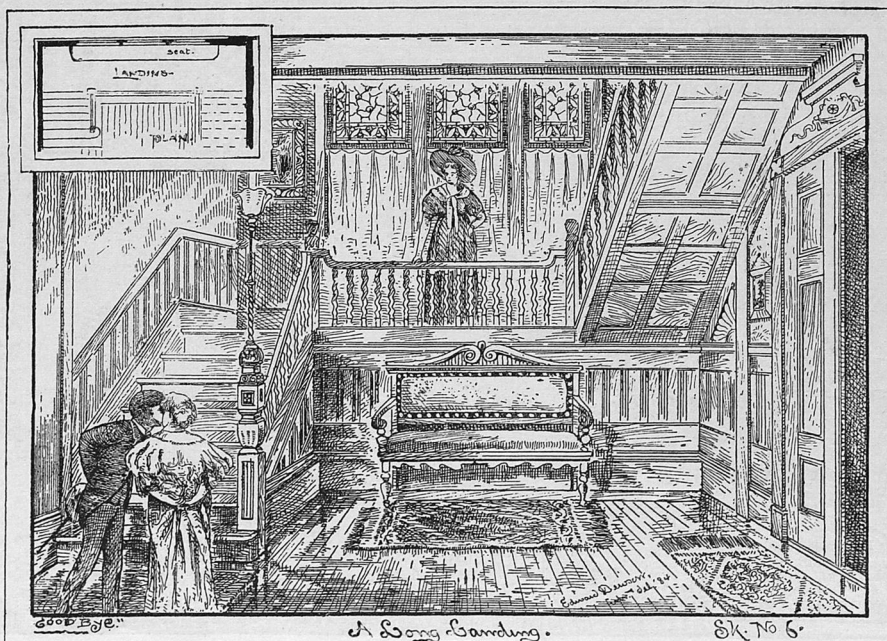
A mirror from floor to ceiling, with curtains on either side, may be attractive where there is no window, and suggests added depth to the landing; the base of the mirror may be protected

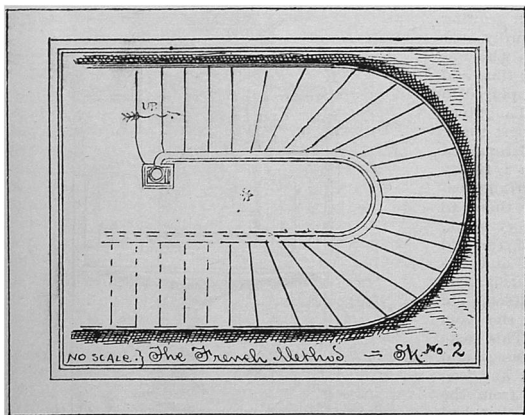


by a little narrow box for flowers, pot plants, or ferns; brackets for china or bronzes in the corners or on the walls are in order, as well as any quaint piece of bronze or iron armor, poignards, swords, etc.; so fine is the plaster imitation of these last named articles, that a complete set of Flemish armor may be bought at a merely nominal price, and once in place, tastefully arranged upon the wall, is hardly distinguishable from the real articles, and as a decorative medium is fully as useful.

Trophies of the chase may find a fitting place in the staircase, hall, or landing, and a few oil paintings or rare engravings may be hung upon the walls. In this matter of pictures, I would suggest that the family portraits, simply but solidly framed, should occupy honorable positions here.

In the decoration of the wall surfaces and ceiling, several alternatives offer themselves to our notice; first, there is





paper; next, paint in oil or distemper; and again, the walls may be hung with ordinary fabrics if economy is necessary, and the fancy is to follow the fashion of the hour; tapestry, of course, stands at the head of this school, and is a rare delight to its owners, but alas, beyond the reach of most of us.

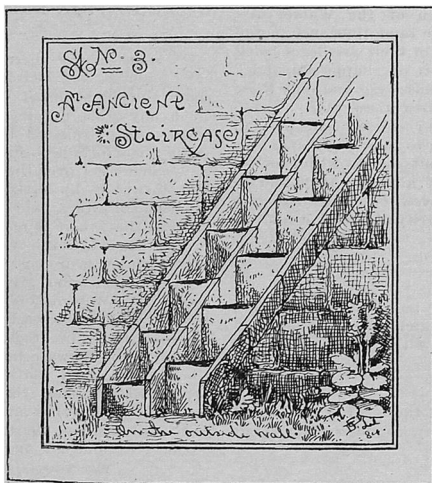
As a matter of example, we will take an everyday hall and staircase, and see what best can be done with it on economical principles. We will suppose our woodwork is walnut, as this is the general rule in "ready-made" houses, and will proceed to arrange a scheme of color that will tend to brighten its sombre hues, trusting to contrasts of color for effect rather than to the simple blending of tones; it is both desirable and appropriate here to use the dado. When the walls are high enough to admit of it, to panel up in wood to a height of six or eight feet, as did our ancestors "in days of old," is rich and effective, but in an everyday hall this plan is not always feasible.

What we will do is this: suppose our walls to be 10 feet 6 inches high, we will measure up 6 feet from the floor for the dado; in the hall, especially the stair runs, this should be high enough and dark enough to prevent stains and rubs from showing readily. Give this a priming coat of olive made from orange chrome, a little chrome green, black and burnt sienna; let the first coat be much the darker, lighting up to the required color in the second coat; this is so that scratches or nicks may not show lighter under, and furthermore, paint covers better with a light coat over a darker, as the light coat is apt to "grin"

advisable to mix in water or distemper, as it is both cheap and durable, especially as in this case it comes above the reach of every day wear and tear. This is made from Oxford ochre and medium chrome yellow, and a still deeper tone may be reached by using orange in place of medium chrome.

For the ceiling, as a balance to the warm colors of the walls, use a good cool greenish gray, not too sharp on the green, avoiding also the depressing leaden purplish tendency; a stile 4 inches wide, of soft yellow olive, with a foxey red line to divide it from the ceiling color, and a black picture molding in the angle between wall and ceiling, completes a scheme of color that may be readily enlarged upon at the householder's discretion, by the added help of stencil work or lines in harmony with the surroundings.

When a house is quite small, and all the available room necessary for social or living purposes, what is to prevent the complete isolation of the staircase, shut in at top and bottom with doors, rather than expose their gaunt and necessarily cramped ugliness to a critical world, for



if there is no room for dignity is it not better that they retire to some secluded spot and there pursue their allotted task with humble simplicity; the space thus made available is pleasanter and much more useful than it possibly could be if blocked by the stairs.

The staircase and plan in the sketch No. 6, shows a pretty and agreeable arrangement, if the surroundings will permit of it. A long landing or walk the whole width of the hall on the outside wall, and if perchance a little bay were added here, where could one find a more agreeable corner for book or work? Such a landing should have, if possible, a wood or parquetry floor, as indeed should the hall floor itself, as the price above what is absolutely necessary and indispensable is not excessive, not exceeding that of a good carpet, and moreover it is a joy forever during the agony of spring cleaning. For treatment, a floor will last for ages with an occasional application of benzine and hot wax, put on with a large brush. The bareness of the wood floor may be remedied by rugs, not many, else the result will be of overcrowding, but scattered here and there, the effect will be cheerful

through, to use a painter's term, when the reverse is the rule. This second coat should be "flatted down" with stippling brushes; the dado should be in oils, on account of the wear and tear it is subject to.

The remaining 4 feet 6 inches we will call the "field," and as there is so little left after taking out the 6 feet dado, we will carry this in a clear unbroken color to the ceiling, omitting, in this case, the customary frieze or border. This "field" we will fill in with a soft golden brown, or old gold tone, not too dark, but rather favoring the yellow, an excellent color for a hall and staircase, especially if there is not much light, and will also contrast well with the sombre hues of the walnut wood work. This color it is

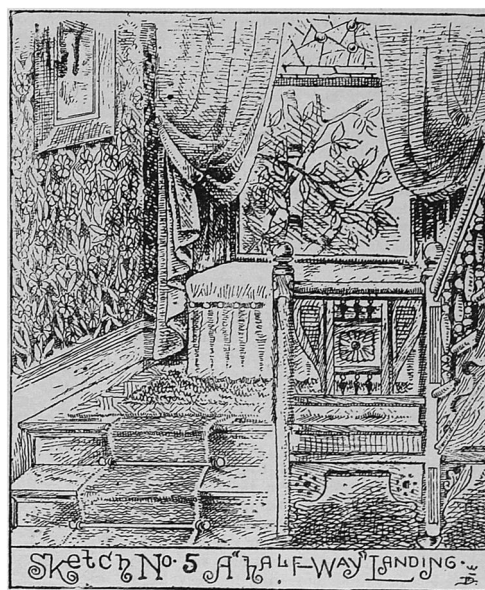
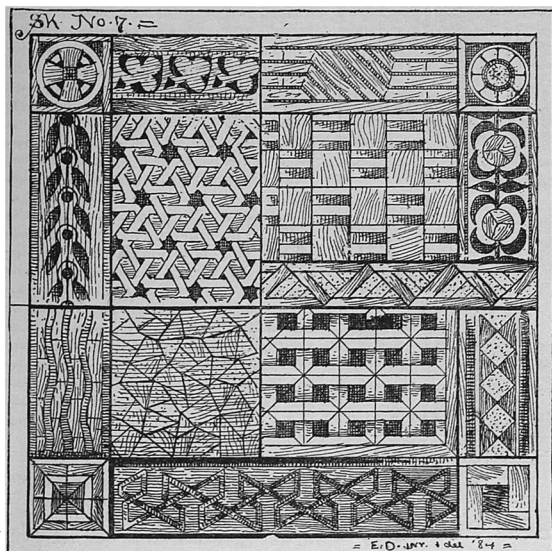
and home-like. Sketch No. 7 shows a number of patterns and borders for parquetry flooring.

Before closing I wish to say a few words about newel posts and their connection with the lighting of the staircase. When gas is used and carried through the newel post, many pretty and effective results may be readily obtained, but when no gas



is attainable, the problem is more of a difficult one. One way and a simple one, is to make available one of the pretty pottery lamps so much in use at the present time. The newel should be designed with a flat top, projecting slightly all around; upon this the lamp is fastened by means of narrow brass straps, as shown by the sketch No. 8; still another and perhaps a prettier method is shown in the sketch No. 9. This is a brass standard, more or less decorative, as the case may require, fastened neatly and firmly to the post, surmounted by a simple basket of brass wire or flat thin strips, into which can be placed one of the pretty corrugated glass lamps of ruby, amber, or blue, so fashionable of late; these arrangements are novel as well as comely, and have the added merit of being quite inexpensive.

For wood finish in a staircase hall, oak has, as a rule, taken the lead, and rightly, as in itself it



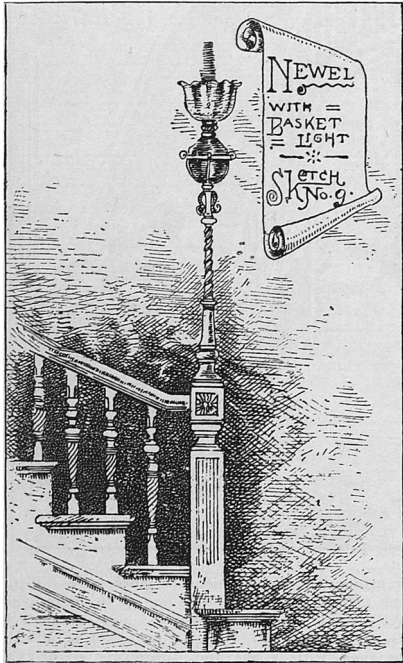
represents the sturdy character that a staircase should have, beside adding much natural beauty that age and proper care enhances. With such finish the stair covering should be of the narrowest, not more than a foot at the widest, allowing a display of the polished wood. Otherwise the fashion of the hour is to cover the stair-



way complete from wall to baluster, and the less of the border showing the more correct the style.

When a stairway is narrow, and a few inches more room desirable, the wooden baluster rails may be removed and their place supplied with a light iron work balustrade, the lower part being level with each stair, quite a little space may be gained, and the arrangement considerably widens the stairway, and in some cases very much enhances its appearance.

Much more may be written and said on this subject than there is either time or space for here,



but the hope is that enough has been suggested to be of use to those who may be considering the remodeling or decorating of that important and oftentimes much neglected feature of the house, the staircase.

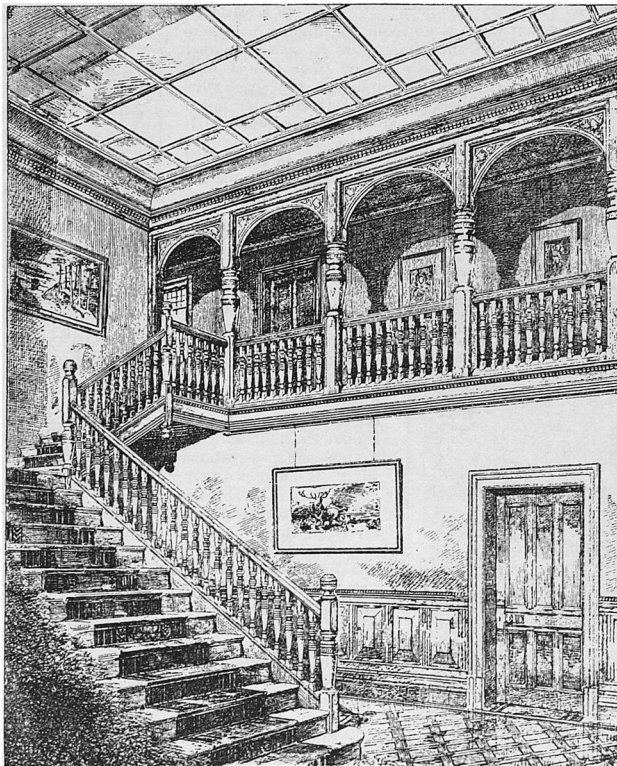
#### ART IN IRELAND.

AT the banquet given by his Worship the Mayor (Mr. Thomas Holder), at the Town Hall on Saturday, August 23, 1884, to the presidents of royal societies, the artists and others engaged in arranging the autumn exhibition of pictures in the Walker Art Gallery, Sir Thomas Jones, the president of the Royal Hibernian Academy, in replying to the toast of the evening, said: "On the part of the presidents of the royal societies and all the artists who had been engaged in arranging the autumn exhibition of pictures, he felt that he was only giving words to the thoughts of these gentlemen in thanking the Mayor most sincerely for his splendid hospitality and for the kind terms in which the toast had been proposed. When he looked round him at that table and saw on each side artists whose names were familiar as household words, and who represented there artist associations of the capital whose fame is world wide and whose art was appreciated everywhere, he asked himself who was he that he should be called upon to respond for these societies. For himself he stood there as president of the Royal Academy of the sister kingdom—(loud applause)—a body of artists who, with the exception of some four or five who in 'your capital have found the fame their shores refused,' he might say were unknown in this country—(no, no)—and, he regretted to say, little appreciated in their own. (Laughter and 'No.') And that, he made bold to say, not from any remarkable shortcoming on the part of the artists, but from the almost utter want of sympathy for art in the Irish people. In no part of the history of Ireland had art or artists taken a prominent place, and though

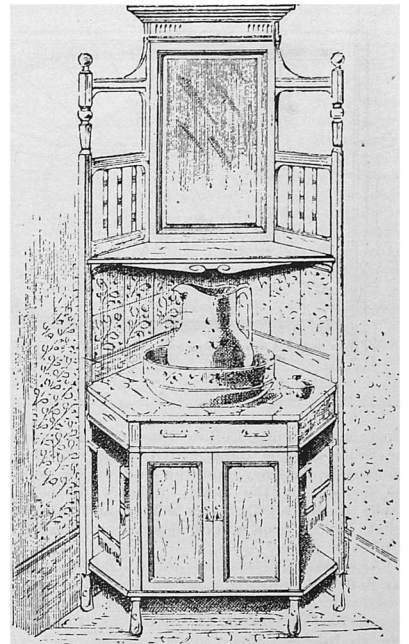
there seemed to be a greater appreciation growing up, it was a very tender plant, and hardly over ground. It was considered that the man who was spending his powers on art was wasting time and energy which might have been better employed in hunting, fishing, fowling, or fighting. (Laughter.) There was a certain taste for art amongst them, if it could be called by such a title, and consisted of a desire to purchase what were known as family pictures. They must, however, fulfill certain conditions. They must not cost more than £6 (laughter)—they must be very old and very black, and must have the names of some of the old masters upon the frames. (Laughter and applause.) He could not understand how this taste had arisen, unless it was that these gruesome old pictures gave a sort of ancestral air to the room which they disfigured. (Hear, hear.) This taste was very common amongst the better classes, and he was of opinion that if they ever had any feeling for art in Ireland it would come from the lower strata. In their annual exhibition they had tried to do what no other academy had done, they had opened their exhibition at night for one penny. It brought a crowd of people who not only took an interest in the pictures, but, he could assure them, some of the remarks and criticisms then made were well worth recording, and by many of them he had profited himself. (Hear, hear.) That annual exhibition was the only opportunity their artists had of coming face to face with the public. If they were successful, well and good; if not, they had to wait a better opportunity. Therefore, they could imagine with what pleasurable feelings they received the generous offer of the Liverpool Committee to aid in the opening of that extension of the Walker Art Gallery, and offering at the same time such munificent terms, not the least of their privileges being that of allowing them a sort of "happy despatch," in letting them "hang themselves," and only those who had to do with pictures knew what a privilege that was. (Applause.) In all that he had said he had no intention to raise a joke at the expense of his country, but merely with the desire to show what kind of a public they had to deal with and with the view of lightening criticism and softening the asperity of hostile comment. —*Liverpool Mercury.*

STAINS on marble may be removed by making a paste of soda, whiting and pumice stone, and rubbing it upon the stain with a rag.

ELECTRIC light affects the color of cloths and paintings in the same way as does the sun, but not so quickly.



NO. 4.—A MODERN ENGLISH STAIRWAY. FROM THE "BRITISH ARCHITECT."



COMBINATION BEDROOM FURNITURE.

IN some houses there are rooms, destined, we presume, for bedrooms, but which are so small that it is almost impossible to place within them any other article of furniture than a bedstead. As a bedstead is insufficient in itself to make a comfortable bedroom, the question arises, how can we get over the difficulty thus presented? The answer is, by having recourse to corner combination furniture, and it is to us a matter of surprise that there is not more of such furniture in the market, considering the large number of existing bijou bedrooms.

Our illustration gives the front view of an article of furniture destined to fulfill the combined purposes of washing table, dressing table, pedestal, and towel-rack. The lower portion is arranged for a washstand with marble top and tile back, beneath the slab is a drawer, and beneath that comes the cupboard in lieu of pedestal; at the sides are two recesses fitted with towel rails. Above the table is a shelf for brush, comb, etc., and an angular cupboard for toilet necessities, the door of which is fitted with a beveled mirror, making the whole complete.—*London Furniture Gazette.*

A FOOT REST, recently improved by a woman, Mrs. C. E. Staniels, of New Hampshire, is to be commended for the ingenuity of arrangement which secures comfort and convenience. The article is capable of being folded into a very small compass and hung up when not in use. It is formed of a lapboard and a foot-board, the soles of the feet resting against the latter in an outward instead of a downward direction. It is unlike the camp chair in being supported on two feet, and in the parts being placed obliquely instead of occupying horizontal and vertical planes. By this means, as also by little rubber pads beneath the feet, it is kept from slipping. When used with a rocker it moves with every movement of the body. The different feeling of repose which this addition affords is surprising in a first experiment of its use; and for invalids and all persons requiring as complete rest as can be afforded it seems very greatly an advantage. It will probably meet appreciation as offering opportunities for decoration. Some of those shown are painted on the wood; others are upholstered with painted or embroidered material.

CEMENT for porcelain and china. —Make a paste of fresh cheese mixed with silicate of potassa, or the white of an egg mixed with powdered lime. Apply immediately.